

Teresa's was My Dad's parish for more than 70 years—A Navaho boy—he bought a four-bedroom house all the way across the street on Pawnee Parkway before they were married—and St. Teresa's became Mom's parish too! As with so many things in our parent's lives and loves together—Mom made it her own—she is rightly remembered for her leadership and involvement in so much of St. Teresa's history—Msgr. Toomey's Golden Jubilee, the first St. Teresa's Restoration campaign—with Fr. Berg—another success as we can see.

Mom and Dad organized the hot dog concession for the Annual Comeback Run and I know people came back—for Mom's brownies—which she would offer with every hot dog sold! She was a lecturer for many years—so standing here—where she stood many times before—feels very right.

Our family thanks all of you here today. We know you share our loss—one of my great friends said "thanks for sharing your Mom with me." There was no choice—My Mother's life was and her legacy will be about sharing. Her devotion to countless classmates and neighbors, her friends and the friends of her children was imbedded into her very being—it was not what she did—it was who she was!

She gave of herself—listening, organizing, collecting for a worthy cause, her talents—singing Danny Boy—always a favorite, fashion show commenting, the wearing of the hats, the baking of the brownies, the donating of the dollars—in fact, we realize our true inheritance is all the good she did—because her money went to so many of you here today—a dollar here, five dollars there—that really adds up, you know).

She gave her heart—when she had her heart attack in 1994—her grandson, James—just a little guy then—said—Gram's heart hurts—because she loves too much—and now, all of our hearts hurt because we loved her so much.

And we have to hurt—but we also must give thanks! If that fact escaped any of our attention—it was Thanksgiving Day when the Buffalo News printed her beautiful picture and life story.

We give thanks for Patricia Doyle born almost 76 years ago to Mike and Gert Doyle of South Park Avenue. At 14, her world would be forever changed by the death of her father—she would have to go to work at Cecil's dress shop every day after class at her beloved Mt. Mercy Academy to help make ends meet—and dreams of college and a teaching career were ended.

Her life was not to be an easy one—but she made it easy for all of us. She was not a teacher by trade—but our greatest teacher by example—she became a legal secretary where many a Judge and co-worker told us—they worked for Mrs. Kane. She would always say the greatest gift you can give your child is to teach them empathy—understanding the feeling of others—and oh, how she understood.

We give thanks for Patricia Doyle whose goodness and beauty caught the eye and heart of a young man named Donald F. Kane—56 years ago—husband and wife for 52 years—wonderful parents and best friends whose mutual respect for each other made them even more successful as individuals. We strive to be better husbands and wives, better parents and friends—better at whatever we do in the workplace—because of their example.

We give thanks for the best Mother and Mother-in-Law, making us each feel special as individuals but showing us nothing is more important than family. Mom to six, Mother-in-Law to five, Grandma Kano to 14, Sis to two brothers whom she loved so much, a Sister-in-Law who became a good friend and confidant, a Cousin who became an older

sister, Aunt Pat to many and 'Chubby Cheeks' to some.

Our Mother always said, "Make a Difference in this World." And we give thanks for the difference she made in all of our lives.

We give thanks to a woman ahead of her time who was always a lady—a politically savvy partner with my Dad—a politically active person on her own—she knew who she was and what she stood for, stayed loyal when it would have been easier to bend, a truth teller—even when we on the receiving end did not always ask for it or want to hear it when it was given—She never had a driver's license—but how she drove us all to be better than we otherwise would have been—A special friend said—"she had the guts to say whatever was on her mind and the integrity to get away with it."

We give thanks for her words—left to us to read, remember, treasure and share. Before there was E-Mail there was "Mom-mail!" Can you imagine the discipline (which I do not have) it took to put paper in the typewriter—with not an insert or delete button in sight—and type out her thoughts to you perfectly—perhaps include an article she clipped or currency for a special treat—what was better than knowing you got a letter from Mom, Grandma Kano, Aunt Pat or Mrs. Kane.

Let me restate that—not all letters brought good news—some brought "constructive criticism," some brought fashion tips including Dr. Scholl's footpads for all of us before a family wedding.

Words were my Mother's actions and her strength. Her own experiences were an endless well of hope and faith, a simple, powerful reminder that you were not alone!

We give thanks for my Mother's love of holidays—and how she helped us get through our first Thanksgiving without her physically present—yet her presence filled the day. We were at my house—watching football, taking the kids to St. Tommy's gym, making fun of me being in the kitchen—and after dinner—Gramps called us together and—told the Grandkids how Grandma Kano talked about what she wanted to do for them for Christmas this year. And of course what she talked about doing—she did—and so—

Gramps called each of them by name and gave them an envelope from Grandma. Tears and thanks were followed by lots of stories and reading from a few of her letters—it is only right to leave you with the words of Patricia Kane—I will read the words but it is her voice I know that you will hear.

"Keep doing what you think is right and realize that not everyone will agree with you. Put a smile on your face—even in the darkest of days, you found Mom with a smile throughout her whole life. Smiles make everyone feel good—yourself and the one to whom the smile is given. God Bless You—keep your head high and your mind ever working and your spirit with God. He will help you every step of the way—I am proof positive of that statement—I love you today and always."

Thank You Mom—We love you today and always!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK GREEN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from Washington on Tuesday, December 6, 2005. As a result, I was not re-

corded for rollcall votes No. 609, No. 610 and No. 611. Had I been present, I would have voted aye on rollcall No. 609, No. 610 and No. 611.

IN MEMORY OF GURDEV SINGH SANDHU

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I was recently informed of the passing of Gurdev Singh Sandhu at the young age of 62. I would like to extend my sympathies to his family and friends. He is survived by his wife Jaswant Kaur Sandhu, whom he married in 1974, his daughters Samreet and Ramneek, his son Sanmeet, his son-in-law Jason Pavlak, and his grandson London Singh Pavlak.

Gurdev Singh Sandhu was a very passionate supporter of Sikh freedom. He came to this country at age 18 and attended Wayne State University. He worked at many careers, including working as an engineer at Motown Records, working at DEA, employment as an engineer at General Dynamics, and a Quality Manager at Thyssen-Krupp Budd Company. He even had a couple of businesses of his own. He was very involved with his children, helping with homework, coaching Little League Baseball, teaching them to ride a bike, and so many other activities. He designed the house where he and his wife lived.

In his last few years, Gurdev Singh Sandhu had learned to play golf, worked in his garden, was active at a local gym, and worked in his yard and on various home-improvement projects. He had recently built a deck and designed his new garage.

Gurdev Singh Sandhu was a strong supporter of the cause of Sikh freedom and the Sikh homeland, Khalistan. He had hoped to live to see Khalistan free. Hopefully, even though he won't be around to see it, this dream will be achieved in very short order.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my condolences to Mr. Sandhu's family and friends and I know that the Members of this House join me in that. May God bless him.

IN TRIBUTE TO MRS. EDITH A. GRAY, DISTINGUISHED CONECUH COUNTY EDUCATOR

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the long service of a distinguished Conecuh County citizen who has contributed to the education of many in Southeast Alabama. Mrs. Edith A. Gray, who turned 95 this year, is truly an inspiration of community service.

A native of Galveston, Texas, Mrs. Gray received her educational training in 1940 at Tuskegee Institute. Already teaching even before she obtained her B.S. degree, Mrs. Gray dedicated over four decades of her life to educating others at Conecuh County Training School.

Gray went on to develop one of the largest and most successful home economics programs in the State of Alabama. She founded the New Homemakers of America (NHA) organization in Conecuh County and the Mother-Daughter-Father-Son organization as a means of bringing families together.

Her insightful programs brought together families to teach them in their own homes a variety of skills from sewing, cooking, decorating, child care, and preserving homegrown foods.

I am pleased to note that due to Mrs. Edith A. Gray's exemplary service she will be honored on December 12 with the office ribbon cutting of the Edith A. Gray Library and Technology Center at Reid State Technical College in Evergreen, Alabama. She is certainly worth of this honor and I extend my personal congratulations to her and her family.

NICS AND MENTALLY ILL

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, for months, I have been discussing how Congress can improve the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) by passing H.R. 1415, the NICS Improvement Act. People who now are barred by current law from possessing a firearm can purchase guns because NICS data is incomplete. The attached article provides more information on why the 109th Congress must pass H.R. 1415.

I want to comment on patient privacy or the stigma of mental illness. The bill contains language directing the Attorney General to work with Federal, State, and local law enforcement and the mental health community to establish protocols for protecting the privacy of information sharing.

My bill does not change current law. The 1968 gun act already bars guns to people "adjudicated as mentally defective or those committed to mental institutions." That is how the law now reads. H.R. 1415 does not change the law.

It is important to remember how the NICS process works. If a NICS search determines that a prospective buyer is barred from getting a gun, then NICS tells the gun dealer that the sale must be "Denied." NICS does not tell the dealer why the purchase is denied. The stigma, if any exists, is that a prospective gun purchaser is denied the gun. Why he was denied does not come into the NICS process.

[From the Hartford Courant, Nov. 27, 2005]

GAPS IN RECORDS ALLOW MENTALLY ILL TO BUY GUNS

(By Mark Sherman)

WASHINGTON.—In Alabama, a man with a history of mental illness killed two police officers with a rifle he bought on Christmas Eve.

In suburban, New York, a schizophrenic walked into a church during Mass and shot to death a priest and a parishioner.

In Texas, a woman taking anti-psychotic medication used a shotgun to kill herself.

Not one of these names was in a database that licensed gun dealers must check before making sales—even though federal law prohibits the mentally ill from purchasing guns.

Most states have privacy laws barring such information from being shared with law en-

forcement. Legislation pending in Congress that has bipartisan support seeks to get more of the disqualifying records in the database.

In addition to mandating the sharing of mental health records, the legislation would require that states improve their computerized record-keeping for felony records and domestic violence restraining orders and convictions, which also are supposed to bar people from purchasing guns.

Similar measures, opposed by some advocates for the mentally ill and gun-rights groups, did not pass Congress in 2002 and 2004.

The FBI, which maintains the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, has not taken a position on the bill, but the bureau is blunt about what adding names to its database would do.

"The availability of this information will save lives," the FBI said in a recent report.

More than 53 million background checks for gun sales have been conducted since 1998, when the NICS replaced a five-day waiting period. More than 850,000 sales have been denied, the FBI reported; in most of those cases, the applicant had a criminal record.

Legislation sponsored by Rep. Carolyn McCarthy, D-N.Y., says millions of records are either missing or incomplete. "The computer is only as good as the information you put in it," McCarthy said.

In the Alabama case, police say Farron Barksdale ambushed the officers as they arrived at the home of his mother in Athens, Ala., on Jan. 2, 2004. Barksdale had been committed involuntarily to mental hospitals on at least two occasions, authorities said.

Facing the death penalty, he has pleaded not guilty and not guilty by reason of mental disease and defect.

The shootings led Alabama lawmakers to share with the FBI the names of people who have been committed involuntarily to mental institutions. But just 20 other states provide NICS at least some names of people with serious mental illness, a disqualifier for gun purchases under federal law since 1968.

Shyla Stewart had been hospitalized five times in Texas, twice by court order. Yet Stewart was able to buy the shotgun that she later used to kill herself at a WalMart in 2003 because Texas considers mental health records confidential.

The same is true in New York, where Peter Troy was twice admitted to mental hospitals but bought a .22-caliber rifle that he used in the shootings inside a Long Island church in March 2002. Troy is serving consecutive life terms for the killings.

As a result of the church shootings, McCarthy and Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., introduced legislation that year to close the gaps in the background check system. The bill would have required the states to give the FBI their records and provided \$250 million in grants to cover their costs.

The bill passed the House without opposition but stalled in the Senate. In 2004, the measure again had the support of lawmakers who support gun rights, but it did not pass Congress.

McCarthy, whose husband was among six people shot to death on a Long Island Rail Road train in 1993, has introduced it again this year, but it has not yet been taken up by a House Judiciary subcommittee.

Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, a National Rifle Association board member, was a sponsor of the bill in the last Congress and continues to support it, spokesman Dan Whiting said. The NRA supports the concept, but it has not taken a position on McCarthy's legislation, spokesman Andrew Arulanandam said.

Michael Faenza, president and Chief executive of the National Mental Health Association, said forcing states to share information

on the mentally ill would violate patient privacy and contribute to the stigma they face.

It's just not fair. On the one hand, we want there to be very limited access to guns," Faenza said. "But here you're singling out people because of a medical condition and denying them rights held by everyone else."

The states that provide some or all mental health records are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wyoming.

HONORING TOWN STEFFAN RETIRING SUPERVISOR MARK CONCORD STEFFAN

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a man whose years of service, both as a councilman, and for the last 4 years as Supervisor of the town of Concord, have served his town admirably. Today, I want to honor retiring Concord Town Supervisor Mark Steffan.

Mark Steffan is someone who loved his town with every fiber of his being. A successful businessman, Mark was elected to the Concord Town Board and his recent service as Supervisor has come at a time when more people in Erie County and western New York look to the town of Concord and its incorporated village of Springville as an outstanding place to live, work and raise a family. It is that way because of the dedicated service of public officials like Mark Steffan.

Mark Steffan and his family are moving on with a planned move out of western New York. I want to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to commend Mark Steffan for his service to the residents and the taxpayers of the Town of Concord, and remind him that local residents are better for the service he provided to town government.

CONGRATULATING MR. PETER A. TAMILIN

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Peter A. Tamilin on his achievements in public service by serving the United States Army for over 33 years.

Mr. Tamilin began his civil service career as an engineer-in-training in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1972. He held positions of progressive responsibility as a civil engineer in the Walter Reed Area Office, the Baltimore District and the Europe District, and began serving at Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1990. In 2002, Mr. Tamilin moved to his current position as the assistant for construction in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army Installations and Housing, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Installations and Environment. As assistant for construction, he has been an invaluable asset in the development and issuance of installation policy with focus on Military Construction